

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning and Economic Development Committee
FROM: Judy Daniel, Director Planning and Development Department
DATE: February 5, 2010
SUBJECT: Proposed Modifications to Planning and Development Fees and Charges

The Planning and Development Department is proposing new fees or modifications to the following existing fees:

- Steep Slope and Ridgetop Permit Review
- Zoning Permits for Single Family/Duplex Structures
- Site Plan Review Applications
- On-Site Review for Approved Permits and Plans
- Re-Inspection Fee for Zoning Site Compliance
- UDO Compliance Letters
- Sale of Certain Maps, UDO Books and Supplements, Master Plans
- Downtown Commission Review Notifications for Zoning Permits
- Research Applications for Verification of Legal Nonconforming Uses, Lots, or Structures

No changes are proposed for the fees for:

- Zoning Permits for Residential Accessory Structures, Decks, and Additions
- Site Plan Review for Residential Accessory Structures, Decks, and Additions
- Signage Plan Reviews

These changes reflect the need to adjust fees to cover the cost of the services, or to add fees for new requirements. Collectively they have the potential to encourage more complete applications and initial compliance, and they will also generate additional revenues between \$60,000 and \$70,000. These revenues would be in addition to the \$200,000 to \$300,000 range that we have seen in the past few years.

The changes include:

Steep Slope and Ridgetop Permit Review – \$50 per application

This is an initial fee reflecting the City's review of new development projects located in designated steep slope and ridgetop areas. The fee is an estimate of the anticipated additional staff time required to review these technical standards. This fee will be evaluated after a year of operation to determine if the fee structure is appropriate to staff time required. It is known that these applications take substantially more time to review than standard permits located outside of steep sloped areas.

Zoning Permits for Single Family/Duplex Structures – From \$25 to \$50

These fees have not increased in several years. The increase brings the fee to a level comparable to many other cities in North Carolina for this type of review; and also better reflects actual staff time required on this type of review.

Site Plan Review Applications – Resubmittal fees, and new fee for Alternative Compliance:

- Level I Site Plan Review: Increase from \$50 to \$75 for a third resubmittal
- Level II Site Plan Review: Establish a \$150 fee for a third resubmittal
- Level III Site Plan Review: Establish a \$445 fee for a third resubmittal

Alternative Compliance Applications: Establish \$50 fee for Level I, and \$100 for Level II projects

These fees better reflect staff time spent on review of what are often multiple site plan revisions for Level I, Level II, and Level III projects. The Alternative Compliance fee establishes a two tier fee because of the increasing number of projects requesting Alternative Compliance at these levels, which require more staff time for review because of their added complexity.

On-Site Review for Approved Permits and Plans – Establishes a \$50 fee

When a project is completed, staff completes an on-site inspection to determine compliance. Modifications during construction of projects often result in multiple changes to approved site plans. The intent of this fee is to provide an incentive for the development to make sure the most recent set of approved plans are available at the building site. The fee is similar to one charged by Building Safety.

Re-Inspection Fee for Zoning Site Compliance – Establishes Re-Inspection fees of \$75 to \$150

There are times when staff is asked to inspect a site that is found to be not ready for an inspection, resulting in a waste of staff time and resources. At times staff has to visit a project site 3-4 times before it is actually ready for inspection. The proposed fee will provide an incentive for developers to be more certain they are ready for an inspection and will cover staff time and travel to such sites. The fee is similar to that charged by Building Safety.

UDO Compliance Letters – From a flat fee of \$200 to a stepped fee of \$200 to \$550

The preparation of these letters requires substantially greater staff time for more complex Level II and Level III projects. The change establishes higher fees for the preparation of letters for those requests.

Research Applications for Verification of Legal Nonconforming Uses, Lots, or Structures

- \$50 for verification of existing lot or structure
- \$100 for verification of existing use of land

This fee is related to the UDO Compliance Letters. The fee reflects staff time required to research this type of request, as many applicants do not have required documentation and proof required.

Sale of Certain Maps, UDO Books and Supplements, Master Plans

Map Fees: Prices for requested maps have stayed the same for several years, but costs for toner, paper, and staff time have increased substantially. The new fees align with IT Services fee structures.

Downtown Master Plan: Establishes a \$25 fee for purchasing a print copy of the Downtown Master Plan, a \$25 fee for a print copy of the Appendices to the Downtown Master Plan, and a \$10 fee for a CD copy of the plan. All fees are set at a level to recover costs of printing and staff time. Copies of the Master Plan and Appendices are downloadable from the City's website at no fee.

2025 Plan and Center City Plan: Changes the fee for these documents from \$50 for the entire 2025 Plan into separate \$25 fees for the 2025 Plan and the Center City Plan. Again, these fees cover the cost of duplication and staff time.

Downtown Commission Review Notifications for Zoning Permits – Establishes \$250 fee

A new Downtown Commission recommendation includes the posting of legal advertisements and direct mailing notifications. This fee is designed to cover the expenses associated with this new notification process for development applications in downtown Asheville.